

An Educational Approach

A Classroom Model to Carry the Message

The single session outlined in this document can be duplicated as presented or can be adopted to different approaches to Recovery as a one-time workshop, weekly class (for a set number of sessions), or as part of an ongoing educational process.

This class is not affiliated with, not approved by, and not required by Alcoholics Anonymous, the Twelve Step Program, Alcoholics Anonymous World Service Organization, or any other service board or body of that fellowship. It is a method for individual members of the Fellowship to carry the message to newcomers or to returnees who are beginners again.

This class is not affiliated with, not approved by, and not required by the Healing Place of Wake County or Recovery Dynamics, but works in cooperation with those organizations.

This is a personalized approach to introducing newcomers to AA, the Steps, the Tools, the Big Book, and the Principles of the Twelve Step program, which are now represented by over 180 Twelve Step programs registered with AA WSO.

The focus is on Recovery and how the newcomer can reproduce the results now enjoyed by several million individuals in over 80 countries around the world.

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Components and Resources

The class outlined in this guide can be structured a number of ways:

It can be:

- a) a one time, workshop structure conducted by a panel with time and experience in the 12-Step Program;
- b) an on-going class where people agree to show up for a certain number of meetings (one session workshop, four week classes, a semester, etc.);
- c) an introductory class for newcomers who may be in a detox, treatment facility, or otherwise assembled as a group.

The structure is seen as educational and not a replacement for doing the work of a 12-Step Program.

When viewed as a teaching vehicle, the focus shifts from traditional sponsor model to one of engagement.

Engagement

The key to successful teaching is engagement – to get the participants of the class, or at least some of them, interacting, sharing questions about the Program, the History, the Steps, the Tools, or details of any of this set of topics.

The session leader or leaders then take this dialog to focus on the topics being raised and is treated as a teaching opportunity.

With teaching, you can only provide the words and ways to make information available. Once a participant become actively involved, the message becomes tailored, and more relevant to that participant's individual Recovery, but also demonstrates to the other people in the class that becoming active effects the way the Program is worked..

For the purpose of the class, this structure has evolved to provide an opening sequence to make particular questions non-threatening for the participants, so that, when the initial presentation is made, we can ask certain

questions without sounding like authorities or superiors.

Remember that we are dealing with alcoholics either new to Recovery and discovering the 12-Step process for the first time, or we are dealing with someone who had previous experience with AA but are now coming off a relapse. They are on the defense and, if they have achieved the necessary “desperation of drowning men”, we can provide relief by allowing them to find some bit of hope in the answer to our questions.

Structure

A structure for the Beginner's Class provides a great deal of flexibility. Framed with an Opening Block, a Closing Segment, and loaded with optional Modules, the class can serve to lead any discussion to the topic of Recovery and show how the participants can become active in their own Sobriety and Recovery.